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AGRICULTURAL REPORT.

From March 20, till April 20, 1809.

THE weather since last Report, has been dry, and favourable for sowing the spring-corn, which has been generally got into the ground in good order.

The wheat crops have not made a progress equal to their appearance last month, the severe frosts at night have had the effect to check the growth of the early, and, in some degree, injure the late crops. In several districts there are complaints of the ravages of the cut worm, particularly where the wheat was sown after clover.

The farmers are now busily employed in preparing their ground for potatoes; it is much to be wished that they would more generally adopt the drill culture of that valuable root, which would not only afford them the advantage of a larger crop from the same quantity of manure, but free their land from weeds, those robbers of the soil, more effectually than can be done in the lazy-bed way.

The only branch of husbandry that seems at a stand is flax, very little of which has yet been sown; the exhorbitant price of seed, added to the reports circulated, of importations from America being expected, have induced the land-holder to decline purchasing, in hopes of a favourable change; the retailers of seed have also been discouraged from buying at the present prices, lest it should prove a bad speculation, as was the case last year, and of course there has been no opportunity presented to the smaller grower of flax to supply themselves in the usual way.

The reports of large importations of seed from America have been, within these two or three days revived, and will probably be the means of protracting the sowing beyond the proper season, and unless realized by the arrival of the seed, be productive of great disadvantage to the country.

Oat meal and potatoes have continued nearly stationary since last Report.

Fat cattle, from the early consumption of the turnip-crops, as was hinted in a former Report, are become scarce, and the price of beef has considerably advanced in consequence.

COMMERCIAL REPORT.

AT the conclusion of last Month's Report, great doubts hung over the exact state in which the American Embargo stood; these are now partly cleared up, and it appears that the Congress conceding to the cry of the mercantile party, have permitted the sailing of their vessels to neutral ports, while they are prohibited under heavy penalties, from coming directly either to Great Britain or France, or any of their immediate dependencies. Holland is not included in this restriction, nor is the island of Madeira; a proof of the impartiality of America, notwithstanding the clamour of her adversaries: an indirect trade is thus sanctioned with both countries. Madeira being as much virtually a dependency on Great Britain as Holland is on France. The Americans have also passed a non-intercourse act with Great Britain and France, to take place on the 20th of next month, the effects of which if not softened by conciliatory measures on the part of those mighty rivals, the belligerent powers, may not unlikely lead to war with one or other, or perhaps with both of them. The Americans, have, however left an open in this non-intercourse act, for reconciliation, with whichever of these powers, which may first recede from their hostile decrees, or orders in council. A ray of hope is held out in some late conversations in parliament, that prudent concession may take place with regard to that highly impolitic measure, the British orders in council.

In America, matters appear to stand thus: the great body of the people are firmly agreed to resist what they consider the aggression on neutral rights; they consequently support the system of the executive, which is in this respect the index of the popular feeling of a great majority of the United States. But on the mode of carrying into effect this opposition, some diversity of opinion appears to prevail. The Mercantile interest wish for an opportunity to send off their superfluous articles; hence the relaxation in the embargo laws, that Great Britain and France may receive American produce through the subterfuge of calling at neutral ports. But it is worthy of observation, that though they admit their own articles to be exported, yet by the operation of the non-importation act, their ports remain closed against the importation of British or French manufactures. And while this continues to be the case, the ill-judged policy of the British orders in council operates, as a high premium in favour

of American manufactures. The non-intercourse act is a measure of still stricter regulation, by which all vessels of Great Britain or France are prohibited from entering into the ports of the United States. It is greatly to be feared that unless conciliatory measures are speedily adopted by our government, actual hostilities may shortly take place. If British cruizers interrupt American vessels going to Holland, war seems to be the inevitable consequence.

Connected with the obnoxious policy of these orders, and of most momentous importance to us in this quarter of the empire, is the expectation of the arrival of a timely and sufficient supply of flax-seed from America, which after all the hopes, which have been held out, and the sanguine expectations which have been formed, remains at the moment of writing this report (the 26th) a very doubtful speculation.

But whether the much wished for, and highly needful supply arrive in time or not, we are entitled to feel no obligations to our statesmen, their adherents, or their echoers. They risked all on a doubtful throw, or to use the figurative language, to which Irishmen are said to be prone, contented themselves with "skying a copper," during the winter, when something effectual might have been done, to remove the dreaded calamity, and whether flax-seed or distress succeeded, depended no more on their sagacity or foresight, than whether "skull or music," was the result of the throw. To the policy of a foreign legislature, probably yielding to necessity, we are indebted for a supply of flax-seed, if that desideratum be at all procured.

At the time the business was first agitated, the true policy was obvious, to petition to have the restrictions, which prevented our receiving the supply removed. Our rulers had a plain path before them: to concede to the necessities of the people, but a tortuous and crooked policy was adopted, and our Irish minister of finance, first opened the English oil stores, poured in a quantity of seed into this country, part of which was of a very inferior quality, and then prevented the people from sowing, by holding expectations of seed arriving from America, which it was very doubtful would not be realized.

It is computed, that as yet not 20,000 hogsheads have reached this country, instead of 45,000 or 50,000, the quantity usually sown. Even if seed arrive in time from America, a large deficiency remains to be supplied. To sow more than the usual quantity is especially necessary after the defective crop of last year. Notwithstanding the difference of opinion which has subsisted as to the proper mode which ought to have been pursued, it must be the wish of all parties, that an adequate supply of good seed may be sown—but there is room to fear, that an ample supply at this advanced period of the season may not arrive in time, and that the poorer people, discouraged by the high price, may not sow all that may arrive, to their own great loss, as in the event of the price falling, they only risque the loss of a few shillings in the purchase of the small quantities they may want; but in case of not sowing, they encounter the danger of losing the means of employment and subsistence for the whole ensuing season. Last year they also judged erroneously, by suffering the high price to deter them from sowing, and much advantage would have accrued if the 6,000 hogsheads which were unsold had been sown. Theorists have said, that speculation is not hurtful—but practical injurious effects do arise from it. It perhaps might not be difficult to show that the true mean lies between the former dread of monopolies, and the present more fashionable doctrines on this subject. The spirit of our poorer farmers, and others in similar situations, is adverse to the high prices attempted through a system of speculation. To a certain degree such a disposition deserves to be cherished, but they may carry it so far as to injure themselves. It now appears evident, that the high prices at first demanded for flaxseed, would not have been paid, and if they had continued, the grounds would have been appropriated to other purposes, although to individual and national loss.

The transactions of the late and the present year, in the flaxseed market, furnish useful hints of caution to speculators. In India whole provinces were desolated by a monopoly of rice, but with us commerce is too extended, and our people too sturdy to permit such plans to be realized.

Much flax is in the hands of speculators, both in England and Ireland, who may probably find it a heavy bargain. It is difficult to procure sales, and the price is nearly nominal. From the injudicious manner in which flax was bought up, probably much of the stock on hands in the warehouses is of inferior quality. At one period, they bought with great avidity, as if secure of enriching themselves, if they only had the possession of flax, though at very exorbitant rates.

From present appearances a very considerable reverse seems likely to take place in commercial speculations. The holders of American produce, *especially cotton*, and all articles connected with the trade to America, may not probably find their golden dreams realized. The spirit of speculation has been carried to unwarrantable lengths, and those who have given way to it, must be expected to suffer. They have contributed to reduce trade to such a state of uncertainty, as to make it resemble too much a speculation in the lottery. Some blanks are now coming up. The quiet unambitious trader has been jostled by the busy speculators, and it is but just that these should have their share of perplexity. Adversity is often an useful instructor, whose lessons are enforced by compulsion.

Many of these evils are assignable to the commercial warfare in which we are engaged. The capitals turned from the former regular channels of trade, have flowed into those of speculation. Large purchases have been made, great gains have accrued in many instances, and probably great losses in the revolution of the wheel will also occur.

A motion has lately been made in the house of commons, by our countryman, Henry Parnell, to equalize the currency between Great Britain and Ireland, but for the present the measure was negatived.

Discount on gold is now reduced to 1, or 1¼, per cent. Exchange has risen, being generally, through the month for guineas, about 7 per cent. and for notes, 8 to 8¼ per cent. A most unfounded report was current for a day or two, respecting one of our northern banks, notwithstanding its undoubted respectability. Great caution should be used in circulating reports injurious to the credit of such establishments. It is one of the evils attendant on a paper currency, to be subjected to false alarms. Under present circumstances, whether desirable or not, paper is likely soon to be our only circulating medium, and to push out, by degrees, the very small quantity of guineas now remaining in circulation. But if the issue from the banks be excessive, or more than is readily and naturally absorbed in circulation, the notes will speedily recoil on the issuers, who, in such cases, will suffer at least as greatly as the public. An occasional check may have a salutary effect, by preventing inordinate issues.

West Indian produce continues to sell at depressed prices.

From present appearances in the North of Europe, our commercial prospects are not brighter in that quarter. The restrictions on the trade in the Baltic, will probably become more severe, without a friendly port in the North to shelter us, and with both sides of the Sound in possession of hostile powers. Of course timber and other northern produce, will probably be still more difficult to procure. The high price of timber continues to occasion much distress to many of our working classes. The small supply which hitherto has come from Canada, affords both in quantity and quality but a very poor substitute. The unjust attack on Copenhagen appears to have alienated the northern powers completely from us; and we must suffer from the effects of this iniquitous proceeding. In speaking of public measures, it is right to set down things as they are, and neither to flatter individuals nor nations in their errors or vices.

MEDICAL REPORT.

List of Diseases occurring in the practice of a Physician in Belfast, from March 20, till April 20.

Barometer.....highest	30 10	Thermometer.....highest	50 00		
mean	29 30	mean	42 00		
lowest	29 0	lowest	34 00		
Typhus,	2	Contagious fever.			
Synochus,	2	Of a mixed nature between inflammatory and typhus fever.			
Opthalmia	3	Inflammation of the eyes.			
Pneumonia,	1	Pleurisy.			
Rheumatismus acutus,	2	Acute rheumatism.			
Aphtha,	2	Thrush.			
Phthysis Pulmonalis,	1	Consumption.			
Asthma,	2	Asthma.			
Asciles,	1	Dropsy.			
Abortus,	1	Abortion.			
Dyspepsia,	3	Indigestion.			